Overview of EM's Site Closure Program

The Department of Energy's (DOE) Environmental Management (EM) Program is the largest environmental cleanup and stewardship program in the world, encompassing activities in more than 30 states and territories. The EM program is responsible for the effective and safe management of extremely hazardous materials and conditions resulting from nuclear energy research and from the legacy of the cold war including facilities, soil, and groundwater contaminated with radionuclides. EM is currently responsible for cleanup at 113 contaminated sites across the country. The EM Office of Site Closure (OSC) has responsibility for 109 of these sites, of which 71 were completed as of 9/30/00. Efforts are ongoing at the remaining 42 EM sites, of which 38 are under the responsibility of the OSC.

EM sites requiring cleanup range in size from several square miles to a few acres, and include facilities formerly used for nuclear energy research and for the production, research and development and testing of nuclear weapons materials and components. The 38 remaining OSC sites to be cleaned up are directly overseen by federal managers at seven DOE operations/field offices. These include offices in Albuquerque, NM; Chicago, IL; Las Vegas, NV; Oakland, CA; Oak Ridge, TN; Miamisburg, OH; and Golden, CO, and specific responsibility is shown below.

- **Albuquerque**: Six sites in five states (Kansas City, MO; Grand Junction, CO; Pantex, TX; Maxey Flats, KY; Sandia Nat'l Lab and Los Alamos Nat'l Lab, NM).
- **Chicago**: Three sites in three states (Argonne Nat'l Lab - West, ID; Argonne Nat'l Lab - East, IL; and the Brookhaven Nat'l Lab, NY).
- **Nevada**: Ten sites in five states of which three sites are located at the Nevada Test Site near Las Vegas, NV, and the other seven sites are former nuclear test areas in AK, MS, CO, NM, and NV.
- **Oakland**: Nine sites in two states (General Atomics, Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, Lawrence Berkeley Nat'l Lab, Lab for Energy-Related Health Research, two Lawrence Livermore Nat'l Lab sites, General Electric Vallecitos Nuclear Center, and the Energy Technology Eng. Center in CA; and the Separations Process Research Unit facility in NY).
- **Oak Ridge**: Four sites in four states (Paducah, KY; Portsmouth, OH; Weldon Spring, MO; and the Oak Ridge Reservation in TN).
- **Ohio**: Five sites in two states (the Miamisburg, Ashtabula, Columbus, and Fernald Environmental Management projects in OH; and the West Valley Demonstration Project in NY).
- **Rocky Flats** Environmental Technology Site in CO.

The primary focus OSC Program is to ensure safe and accelerated closure of the sites under OSC responsibility. Site closure is the point at which the following objectives are achieved:

- environmental remediation is complete and meets regulatory requirements;
- legacy waste management activities are complete and material is dispositioned;
- real and personal property is removed, disposed or transferred;
- long-term stewardship plans are developed and approved; and
- contracts are terminated or transferred, as is the workforce.

Several new management strategies are being implemented to reduce cost and the time required to complete site closures. This includes: (1) innovative contracting approaches, (2) enhanced programmatic integration, (3) administrative streamlining, (4) regulatory streamlining, (5) improved technologies, and (6) new financial/budget strategies. Additionally, the OSC is working with other Federal agencies to share best management practices and lessons learned for the closure of Federal facilities. OSC has also worked to establish successful partnerships involving State and local governments, public interest groups, tribal governments, labor organizations, and citizens.